RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 12th March, 1999/21 Phalguna 1920 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock, **Mr. Chairman** *in the chair.*

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Review of Problems of AIIMS

*241. SHRI SANATAN BISI: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to review the current problems prevailing in All India Institute of Medical Sciences; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) The Faculty Association of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi had proceeded on indefinite strike from 8th February, 1999 to demand implementation of the recommendations made by the K.K. Baksi Committee with modification in the pay scale of Additional Professor.

The pay scales and allowances had earlier been revised by the Central Government as under after taking into consideration all relevant factors and recommendations of the K.K. Baksi Committee report:—

Designation	Existing pay Scale	Approved by the Govt.
Asstt. Prof.	3500—4500 (with 5 increments in the scale of 3000—4500)	11625—15200
Assoc. Prof.	4100—5300	14300—18300
Addl. Prof.	5100—6300	16400—20900
Professor	5900—7300	18400—22400
Director	8000 (fixed)	26000 (fixed)

Apart from the revision in the pay scales, it was also decided

- to place 25% of the posts of Professors in the scale of Rs. 22400—24500.
- The Faculty Members were to be paid non-practicing allowance @ 25% of their basic pay.
- They would, in addition, also be paid a clinical research allowance Rs. @ 2500/- per month in lieu of the research pursuit allowance (Academic Allowance) of Rs. 250/-per month.

Subsequently, the age of superannuation of the faculty has been enhanced from sixty years to sixty two years.

On account of the strike, Casualty, OPD Services and Speciality Clinics at AIIMS Hospital and attached centres remained suspended. Routing surgeries also remained suspended.

Indoor patients were looked after and the ward rounds were undertaken as usual. Few emergency surgeries were

performed and some emergency admissions were also made.

The Government strengthened the OPD and Emergency Wings in Safdarjung and Dr. R.M.L. Hospitals to minimise the difficulties of the patients because of strike in AIIMS. For treatment of CGHS beneficiaries, instructions were issued that the total cost of treatment, during the strike period in AIIMS, in private hospitals recognised under CGHS/CS(MA) Rules, 1944 in Delhi would be reimbursed subject to certain conditions.

The Government referred the matter of revision in pay scales to a Group of Ministers. The Group of Ministers, while considering that the demands regarding the pay scale restructuring from the Faculty Association of AIIMS was not practicable in view of the competing claims from other similar institutions, decided in the meeting held on 22nd February, 1999 that the representatives of the Finance Ministry, Department of Personnel & Training and the Department of Health would consider the possibility of such further improvement in the pay scales of the faculty of AIIMS/ PGIMER as would avoid competing claims provided the Faculty Association agree to withdraw the strike so that the issues can be resolved in a cordial atmosphere. The proposal relating to grant of Special Allowance to the non-faculty staff would be considered by this Committee. The Faculty Association have since called off their strike and resumed duties on 25.2.99. The High Court of Delhi by its interim order on Civil Writ Petition No. 849 of 1999 as announced on 3.3.99 has *inter-alia* given time upto 30.6.99 for the Government to take a final decision on the pay and allowances to be paid to the faculty of AIIMS.

Non-faculty staff of the Institute have already been given replacement scales pursuant to the recommendations of the 5th Pay Commission.

SHRI SANATAN BISI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, may I know from the Minister as to why his statement is silent about teaching, research and patient care?

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I could not get the hon. Member. Could he repeat the question?

SHRI SANATAN BISI: Your statement is silent about teaching, patient care and research.

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM: The House is also silent.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As long as you are there, how can there be silence?

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI: The question itself is very clear "whether Government propose to review the current problems prevailing in All India Institute of Medical Sciences." We have given a detailed written answer regarding the current affairs and current issues which are prevailing in the Institute. If there is any specific question, I will be able to answer.

SHRI SANATAN BISI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Minister's reply is not clear.

The second thing I want to know is about the Institute's Annual Report. As per section 19 of the Indian Institute of Medical Sciences Act, 1956, the Annual Report is supposed to be laid on the Table of both Houses. May I know from the hon. Minister as to what observations of the Governing Body are on the Annual Report?

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI: The Governing Body and the Institute's Body meet periodically. These Annual Reports are yet to come before the Governing Body. Those are to be processed by the Institute's authorities. Then, they are placed before the Government Body and the Institute's Body.

SHRI SANATAN BISI: As per section 19 of the Act when was the Annual Report laid on theTable of the House?

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI: It is laid regularly.

SHRI SANATAN BISI: No. It is not laid regularly. As per section 19 of the AIIMS Act, it is mandatory for the Ministry to lay a copy of the Annual Report on the Table of both Houses of Parliament.

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI: The Annual Report for the year 1997-98 is not yet ready. The Annual Report for the year 1996-97 has already been laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI SANATAN BISI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is how the Institute is functioning.

रेल मंत्री (श्री नीतीश कुमार): अरे एक साल पुराना ही रखा जाता है।

SHRI ASHOK MITRA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the issue has very great national relevance. This is the major Medical Institute in the country. At least the general public assume that the sophsiticated equipment that is available in the public sector is concentrated in this Medical Institute. People come from all over the country. I know of individuals, with very little means, who have a young child, perhaps, has to be treated for a rare disease. They were given a date. They have arrived with their child. They have travelled all the way from Tuticorin. When they arrived with their child at the Institute, the authorities told them, "The Institute is on strike. Nothing can be done. You have to go back." This is happening with hundreds of families. We should do something about it. Again, I can see that the Minister for Health can do very little about it. We, as a nation, decided to cross over to liberalisation. We started encouraging private medical centres where they have very large facilities and they offer very large salaries to the faculty. What can you do? You have the unwritten rule that a Professor cannot get more than what a Secretary to the Government of India gets; you have a ceiling amount of around Rs. 25,000-Rs. 30,000 per month; whereas in the private sector, the same individual, perhaps, draws somethings around Rs. 2 lakhs or Rs. 3 lakhs per month. This is happening. And sometimes, because of the proliferation of multinational companies, an offspring of these Professors, a young brat of 23-24 years of age, coming out of an institution of management, gets into a foreign bank or foreign multinational company and is offered, straightway, Rs. 50,000-Rs. 60,000. This is a social menace that you have created on your own. I would like to ask or request the Minister to tell us whether he has any suggestions to offer in this regard. Otherwise, I would certainly say, this is a matter in which the entire Cabinet should now decide together.

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I certainly share the feelings of the hon. Member. Of course, he has so much of sympathy and understanding in respect of the prevailing situation in the health sector. As a premier institution in Delhi, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences was established with noble objectives and still we are trying to work towards the achievement of those goals. Strikes, certainly, cause inconveniences and, as you say, people from Tuticorin, from Kashmir, come to the AIIMS. As we know, in the Government sector, we have very few institutions. As he said, that is the only one institution which has got equipment and infrastructure, to some extent, to take care of the patients. With that, we have to just manage and at present, in the AIIMS, with the existing, possible, support, we do take care of people. If we see the figures, in the year 1997-98, the attendance in the OPD runs into 17 lakhs; the number of people who have got admitted in the AIIMS is more than 1 lakh 1,00,500 people have undergone surgeries; and several lakhs of people come there for treatment. We, the Government, are taking all possible steps to improve, update as well as accommodate more facilities in the institution and for the effective

functioning of a hospital and institute like the AIIMS in the Capital City of Delhi, beginning with the OPD. Of course, as he says, in the private sector, the emoluments are lucrative and in the Government sector, we cannot think of that much accommodation. The facilities available to the faculty members are also not to their satisfaction. But still, the Government is trying to do whatever is possible in the present situation, to help the faculty members, who are really working very hard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think, the question which has been raised by the hon. Member is a very large question. Mr. Minister, you cannot reply anything more. It would be better if we have a discussion on the Ministry of Health.

DR. MANMOHAN SINGH: Mr. Chairman, Sir, one of the major problems facing the All India Institute of Medical Sciences right now is the acute dissatisfaction in the faculty on the pay-scales. The hon. Minister has referred to the subject. As I understand, recently, there has been a judgment of the Delhi High Court asking the Government to implement the Bakshi Committee's report which was prepared at the instance of the President of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences I would like to know from the hon. Minister how long it will take the Government to implement the report of the Bakshi Committee so that the present phase of acute dissatisfication among the faculty of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, a most prestigious national institute, is brought to an end.

SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI: Sir, I thank the hon. Member for raising this question. Sir, the Bakshi Committee was appointed by the President of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences in the capacity of the Health Minister. My predecessor has done that. After that, Secretaries have also been changed. When Mr. Bakshi came, he took up the issue and gave the recommendations. But before deciding the methodology for considering the problem of the AIIMS faculty, this issue should have been taken up with the Department of Personnel, the cadre- controlling authority, and the Finance Ministry simultaneously. But that has not been done. Due to that reason, a delay in submitting the report and its consideration and acceptance at the Government-level has occurred. When we considered that, all these things cropped up and we have to overcome those things. That is how a Group of Ministers was set up. The hon. Member has just now said that with regard to the implementation of the recommendations of the Bakshi Committee report, the Court has also given its verdict. They have clearly said that it is to be considered and implemented within a time-frame. They have given the date also. But with regard to the pay and allowances in the Government sector, we have to take into account its implications in other sectors also, particularly in the Department of Science and Technology and other research organisations because the All India Institute of Medical Sciences is considered to be an institute of excellence, and we have several other institutions also. Therefore, it is to be considered in that way, and when the Court considered it, they have set out a date and have given their views on this issue. When it came to the Government, the Government considered it and then decided to go in appeal to the higher Court in view of the implications that will be created in other sectors and the precedent that will be set in the Government sector. The Court has only asked us to implement the Bakshi Committee Report from 1.3.99 till the time the Court gives a final decision. This is the position with regard to the Bakshi Committee report concerning the AIIMS faculty.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, next question. Question No. 242. (*Interruptions*)

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Sir, I may be allowed to speak on this ques-

tion. I had raised my hand in the beginning. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. Fifteen minutes have already been spent on this question. There are twenty questions. Shri C. Ramachandraiah. (*Interruptions*)

श्री मोहम्मद आज़म खान: इस पर डिस्कशन होना चाहिए....(व्यवधान)

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Sir, I also want to put one question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no. Already 15 minutes are over. Next question, Mr. Ramachandraiah.

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Sir, I had raised my hand earlier. (*Interruptions*). Everyday this is happening. (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question. Question No. 242. No other thing will go on record.

MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Everyday this is happening.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No other thing will go on record. Already 15 minutes are over. (*Interruptions*). Mr. Ramachandraiah. (*Interruptions*). Next question is also very important. Shri Ramachandraiah, please put the question.

Railway facilities at Tirupati

*242. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Tirupati is the largest pilgrim destination in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) whether it is also a fact that Railways have not enhanced facilities for passengers at Tirupati;

(c) what are the present hours for buying reservation tickets at Tirupati and Renigunta in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh;

(d) whether it is a fact that a 24 hour reservation booking facility is direly needed at Tirupati; and

(e) what steps the South Central Railway are taking to make better arrangements for rail users at Tirupati and Renigunta?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir,

(c) The maximum working hours of computerised reservation offices on all Indian Railways are from 0800 hours to 2000 hours daily and from 0800 hours to 1400 hours on Sundays and the same facility exists at Tirupati and Renigunta also.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Tirupati and Renigunta stations are provided with amenities commensurate with the volume of passenger traffic. The facilities include adequate number of platforms, cover over platforms, waiting hall, waiting rooms, retiring rooms, seating arrangements, water supply arrangements etc. The amenities are being further augmented by extension of cover over platform and provision of computerised public address system at these Stations. Modern gadgets are also proposed to be provided in the base Kitchen at Tirupati. Besides, there is a proposal to introduce a Shatabdi Express train between Chennai and Tirupati during 1999-2000.

Works for augmenting amenities further will also be considered whenever so warranted by growth in passenger traffic.

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH. The entire country knows that Tirupati is a very important pilgrimage centre. Daily, thousands of people visit the town to have darshan of Lord Balaji. More than 50 per cent of the pilgrims who visit Tirupati travel by train. But, unfortunately, the number of computer reservation counters working at Tirupati is the same as compared to other areas. The Minister